2: Becher

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776

/Information on the hekurá, gigantic prototypes of all the species of plants and animals, has been filed in category 774./

Surára
Pakidái

854 514 [123] /64 cont./ If the child's nose is not clean, the mother carefully takes it between her teeth, presses its contents into her mouth, and spits them out. The women found it most unhygienic that I blew my nose into a handkerchief and carried it with me.

856 593 The little Surára and Pakidái learn to walk and talk at the same age as the children of civilization, and they are aided by their parents, siblings, and relatives. The pleasure of the relatives is great and they are overjoyed when the child is able to stand and walk and babble its first words, náp̈e=mother and háp̈e=father.

862 e) Name-giving

After the completion of the third year, a new, important period of life begins. The nursing period is ended, and the child, [851] which hitherto belonged to the flesh and blood of the mother (325b), has become an independent human being.

851 846 114 171 842 325b. This idea is very unusual for South American Indians. It should be remembered, however, that among most of the tribes the so-called couvade, the men's childbed, is practiced. Karl von den Steinen, who has examined the psychological basis of this custom, says that in this case the child, whether it be a boy or girl, is "the little father," so to speak, a part of the father, that is, a bit of his body. (K. von den Steinen, 1894, pp. 334 ff.) "The activity of the mother in this connection is compared to that of the soil, which receives the seed." (von Spix and von Martius, 1831, p. 1339.)

000 553 776 [782] has become an independent human being. Now it is also given a name, which is taken from the animal or vegetable kingdom. The name is given to the father, when he offers his prayers in snuff-powder intoxication, by the gigantic animal and plant spirits living on

/64 cont./
553 776 [782] high mountain ridges -- hekurá --, who represent the intermediaries to Poré and Perimbó, the joint Supreme Being of these Indians (see pp.197/199). The particular animal or plant whose name a child bears is regarded as a sort of "spiritus familiaris" throughout its life. This is linked to the idea that the fate of the child has now become identical in essence with them; that is to say, good fortune, but also the suffering and dying of animals and plants are transferred to the like-named human beings.

553 114 191 The use of animal names corresponds to the nagualistic ideas and customs which Eduard Seler mentions in his monograph /65/ on Michuacan /Michoacán/ (326), while plant names are

326. Seler, 1908, pp. 104/05.

also included under the same aspect by the Surára and Pakidái. The name "nagual," according to Seler, is derived from the Aztec word naualli = disguise (327). In place of nagualism, however, the

327. Seler, 1904, pp. 75/76.

technical term "tonalism" may also be used (Aztec tonalli = someone's destiny, fate, soul, spirit...) (328).

328. Haekel, 1958, p. 45.

553 302 [412] [824] On the day of the name-giving the children are given a tonsure such as is worn by all adults of both sexes. It is shaved off with the sharpened side of a split piece of reed (taquara -- Guadua sp.). Simultaneously they are attired for the first time in 553 291 the hip cord of cotton or plant fibers, which they may then never remove up to the end of their lives, not even while bathing or during sleep. The cord must, of course, be renewed occasionally, but this is done in all secrecy. At the time of the donning of the hip cord by little boys, the penis is tied up, with the preputium held fast under [834] the cord by means of a loop (Ill. 22). From now on the penis must no longer hang down, for this would be an offense against good [292] form. On festive occasions a belt of cotton is also tied around children (See pp. 64ff.).

Surára
Pakidái

884 /67 cont./
86 poisonous snake of South America, which is over three meters
[302] long. The painting is supposed to help to banish the dangers that
[825] emanate from this and other poisonous snakes. As daily nourish-
[262] ment the two candidates may take only a ripe banana and half a
liter of water. After two months they are very thin and appear to
[276] be nothing but skin and bones. In order to suppress their feeling
of hunger and thirst, they constantly have the roll of tobacco
mixed with water and ashes between their lower or upper lip and
[782] teeth (see p.190). Moreover, they must blow large pinches of
[276] the snuff-powder into each other's noses several times a day in
order to make contact with the gigantic animal and plant spirits --
hekurá. Thus, they pass their training period in a regular trance-
state.

884 It is worth noting that the initiation rites of the male members
756 of the tribe take place comparatively late, and that in this way
• 776 all the men are gradually trained as medicine-man helpers.
Through this, the Surára chief Hewemão explained to me, they
are able to protect themselves and their families against sickness
and accidents in an emergency. If, for example, a man is
threatened along the way by a poisonous snake or a jaguar, he is
now in a position to banish the danger by calling upon the tutelary
spirits. He must never fail to thank the hekurá after a successful
hunting expedition or a good harvest, however, for otherwise he
755 would incur their anger. Even when his wife, one of his children,
[753] or a relative falls ill, he himself must first try, by means of song
and dance in which he addresses the hekurá, to hurl the sickness
back to the hostile tribe from which it was sent. Only if his efforts
remain unsuccessful may he appeal for the aid of the chief, who
is always willing and, with the help of 8-9 assistants, carries out a
great rekurá (cure). Thus, during the day /68/ or at night among
the Surára and Pakidái one frequently sees one man, or often even
several men, praying or attempting to cure a member of the
[276] family. Before that, however, they must take snuff-powder because
contact with the hekurá can be made only in a state of intoxica-
[533] tion. The songs are somewhat monotonous and are combined with
animal sounds, animal movements, such as the beating of wings,
hopping, etc.

Surára
Pakidái

/88 cont./

123
276

434. (cont.)
servant Mateus and I were thereafter dependent on the cultivated tobacco of the Indians, which, however, was so strong that we simply could not enjoy it. Mateus, however, had the happy idea of washing the tobacco several times and then he let it dry in the sun. Since we had plenty of cigarette paper with us, we were not obliged to give up our customary enjoyment of cigarettes. We could never have become accustomed to sucking out the tobacco, for every attempt resulted in retching.

276 The narcotic snuff powder, similar to yopo or paricá, is made up of various ingredients, of which I was able to identify, besides the roasted and pulverized paricá seed (Piptadenia peregrina Benth.), the ashes of the burned bark of a wild species of mimosa (Mimosa acacioides?) -- hekurâhihenâ -- (435), as

[192]
[776]
[787]

435. This, it should be noted, contains the word with which the gigantic animal and plant spirits are called -- hekurâ -- with which the men are able to make contact only by means of the snuff powder.

well as a cultivated pepper plant /89/ (Piperacea sp.) -- maxarahâ -- (436) (437).

[192]
[184]

436. Zerries found the same combination among the Waiká, and even the names for the pepper plant are almost identical; the Waiká call it "masho hara." The bark of the mimosa, in which Zerries suspects there is an alkaloid, is, however, used only in the dried or roasted state (Zerries, 1956b, p. 154).

[126]

437. Herr Prof. Dr. Klaus Soehring of the

/90 cont./

514 [264] There is frequent belching during and after eating, and it happens not infrequently that a member of the family breaks wind, often with a loud noise, which, however, is received with happy laughter, without any damage to the appetite. Both sexes also spit a great deal as a result of the tobacco rolls which they have in the mouth almost constantly (see p. 190).

Urination is done in the immediate vicinity of the maloka during the day and in the hearth at night. Men and boys always urinate in a squatting position, just like women and girls. For their other needs they all go a bit deeper into the forest clearing during the day, or even to the edge of the forest. When they have finished, they rub the seat back and forth a few times on the ground or against a tree trunk. The mother holds small children, in case she happens to be lying in the hammock, over the edge of it. Then she wipes her hand or lower arm across its seat a few times, or, if necessary, she uses a little stick to clean it. The little heap is covered with ashes or earth and stamped into the ground by the mother. If an adult has more important business to attend to at night, he digs a small hole beside the hammock and subsequently covers it with ashes or earth. Old or sick persons do this during the day as well. [825] The reason that the Surára and Pakidái do not leave the maloka at night for the [776] aforementioned purpose is because they are afraid of snakes and jaguars, as well as of nonexf, the evil spirit which transmits sickness (see p. 211). Persistent unpleasant odors are not noticeable even in closed malokas, however, since they are dispelled by the ascending smoke of the constantly burning fire.

841 During their menstruation the women do not use anything to absorb the blood (see pp. 142/143). Pools of blood that remain on the ground are obliterated by them with their feet.

356 123 291 In general, however, the communal house is kept quite clean. One always sees men and women sweeping with a broom made of piaçaba fibers. For this work both sexes liked to put on the shirts and trousers or clothing which I had brought them as gift articles and which were otherwise not at all appreciated.

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Surára
Pakidái

VIII. Religion and Magic

1. The Religious Conception of the World

821
•776 According to the view of the Surára and Pakidái, the earth is a disk over which the sky arches like a bell. All power emanates from the moon -- Perimbó -- and from Poré, the lord of the moon, who is pictured as an old man with a long white beard and a tonsure painted red. Occasionally he comes down to earth, but is then invisible to human beings.

Thus, Poré and Perimbó constitute an inseparable unity that is regarded as eternal, just, and benevolent, but is also able to punish, if necessary. To it is attributed the origin of the earth and all life, and it is assumed that the events of creation followed in direct as well as in indirect fashion (442).

442. The creation myth of the Yanonámi /Yanoama/ represents an example of such indirect creations (see pp. 247/248).

821
775 The moon, a large, open, circular maloka located in the midst of a planting and surrounded by forests, mountains, and rivers (443), is at the same time regarded as the place where

443. The picture of the surface of the moon corresponds to the open, almost circular Surára maloka (see pp. 25/27).

all the souls of human beings who were cremated after death lead a paradisiac existence under Poré. There are animals, plants, and fruits in abundance here, and no moon-dweller need ever suffer hunger and thirst.

[964]
[774] But only with the smoke rising during the cremation can a soul -- uwexík -- (identical with cloud, smoke), which exists in the bones and never leaves the body during life, reach this paradise. The souls of the dead who are not cremated become shadows -- petanúhi -- that must wander about restlessly,

/91 cont./

821 of thirst and weakness, while plants often wither. For this reason, and especially out of fear of the shadows, the sun's rays are regarded as dangerous. Therefore, tasks for which one must expose himself to the direct radiation of the sun, for example, forest clearing, cultivation of fields, and house construction, are preferably undertaken in cloudy or even rainy weather. In the latter case, there is even a direct /92/ connection with the moon. A large tree stands on this celestial body, in the middle of the open maloka. When Poré shakes it, the wind rises first, and after that rain falls. The aversion of the Surára and Pakidái to the merciless sun's rays of the equatorial zone has a further, matter-of-fact explanation, for in former times, as pure hunters and gatherers, they practically never came out of the eternal twilight of the primeval forest.

821 The awe of Poré and the moon is so great that the Indians 774 do not dare pray personally to this united Supreme Deity. Serras 774 /sierras/ -- peatíle -- as well as gigantic animal and plant [1982] spirits -- hekurá -- (446), who live on them and are characterized [192]

446. This word is derived from hetumisse = heaven and he = head, above.

by supernatural qualities, are the mediators. The serras are well suited for this, because they are situated between the earth, on the one hand, and the moon and sun on the other. They are regarded as higher divine helpers, who, after Poré and Perimbó, are the mightiest. At the same time they are regarded as the masters of all the animal and plant spirits living on them. Their power is much greater than that of the sun because there is, of course, only one sun whereas there are innumerable serras. Their attitude toward Poré and Perimbó, however, is not always a loyal one. Usually they are on their side, to be sure, but if there is occasionally a quarrel between them, it may happen that they ally themselves with the sun for a time. The united Supreme Deity has taken precautions, however, and considered any possible

Suréra
Pukidai

821 /92 cont./
776 danger. For the fact that it has chosen the serras as dwelling
774 places for the gigantic plant and animal spirits is injurious to their power if it is directed against Poré and Perimbó. In contrast to the serras, the hekurá are steadfastly faithful followers of the united moon deities and, together with the stars, protect them against any attacks on the part of the sun and its temporary allies. Sometimes, in an altercation which the serras wage with the moon or sun, an eclipse of the moon or sun appears, because the celestial body in question wishes to conceal itself from the other, so that it will not be drawn into the dispute (447). If, for example, it becomes dark before a thunderstorm and lightning begins to flash, then the sun is very thirsty, is hiding behind the serras and asking for rain. The latter relay the request to the moon. But it does not want to comply with the sun's wish, and already there is reason for the serras and the moon to quarrel. Then when it thunders, Poré has a headache out of anger, and he finally shakes the rain tree to put an end to the quarrel.

[191]

447. The relationship of moon and sun also plays a special role in the religious and mythological ideas of various other Indian tribes. In the myth of the Yurakaré /Yuracare/, for example, it is treated in the sense of the Orpheus motif (Rodrigues, 1875, pp. 252 ff.; d'Orbigny, 1835/47, III, p. 210).

774 The hekurá are gigantic prototypes of all the species of plants and animals that live on certain serras that are taboo for human beings. These nature spirits are regarded as subordinate helpers of Poré and Perimbó. They are usually favorably disposed toward human beings, permit and facilitate hunting, gathering, and agriculture for them. The men, however, must always show their gratitude to them by prayers, and they may
774 not indiscriminately destroy animals and plants. This is also
55 related to the fact that all members of the tribe, men, women,

Surára. Pakidái Waica

/92 cont./ and children, bear names of plants or animals (see pp. 138/139). This results in a symbiosis which at the same time furnishes proof of the alter-ego motif to be found here. If a person who has passed the third year of life dies, an animal or plant of the species whose name he bore must likewise be killed or its death be brought about. This is done so that, for the long journey to the moon, the soul of the deceased has a companion who leads the way and facilitates for it entrance into the paradisiac realm of the dead (see also p. 149).

/93/ If the chiefs, who, of course, are at the same time medicine men, or other male members of the tribe wish to make contact with the nature spirits, either in connection with curing the sick, before or after hunting expeditions, on the occasion of prayers of thanksgiving for a successful harvest, etc., they have another man blow narcotic powder into the nose with a bamboo tube and immediately afterwards fall into a state of intoxication in which they feel themselves to be giants among giants (see p. 193). Thus, it is understandable that in a snuff-powder intoxication they identify themselves with the hekurá and use a very similar sounding word -- rekurá -- for any magical performance.

If one compares the beliefs of the Surára and Pakidái with those of the related Waikâ /Waica/, who were studied by Otto Zerries, Meinhard Schuster, and the American Missionary James Paul Barker (448) (449a) (449b), one finds that they are largely

448. Zerries, 1958a.

449a. Zerries, 1958b.

449b. Barker, 1953.

in accord in their basic features.

All the tribes mentioned believe in a Supreme Being, Poré or "Omaua," respectively, and ascribe to it the creation of the earth and all living creatures. To be sure, there are certain differences, which may, however, be traced back to external influences. Thus, Poré is brought into relationship with the moon --

Surára
Pakidái
Waica

776
184 /93 cont./ Thus, Poré is brought into relationship with the moon--
821 Perimbó -- and with the latter forms an inseparable unity (450).

[114]
[171]

450. This conception, which seems rather strange and in which Josef Haekel therefore thinks he sees a contradiction (Haekel, 1959, p. 40), is, however, also confirmed for the Uitoto /Witoto/, for Preuss writes about it, among other things: "We thus have here the rare instance in which, through a combination of the god of the earth and a moon demon, a single deity has arisen, a sort of monotheism, alongside of which there are only very insignificant demons" (Preuss, 1922, p. 176). And elsewhere he states: "The fact that moon and Supreme Being here coincide may therefore have come about later, but not necessarily. Today we have them as an inseparable unity" (Preuss, 1922, p. 184).

whereas "Omaua," together with a helper, "Yoaua," lives in the western sky, where they too produce rain, in that they pour the water out of the two celestial rivers (451). In contrast to this

451. Zerries, 1958b, p. 280.

among the Surára and Pakidái it is believed that Poré shakes the rain-tree of the moon (see p. 199).

821 Great significance is also attached to the moon by the
184 Waiká, and, significantly enough, also in connection with the
773 creation of human beings. This may be seen from their legend of primitive times (452), which, except for minor deviations,

452. Zerries, 1958b, p. 280.

corresponds to the one which the Surára chief Hewemão told me

/93 cont./

793 191

455. (cont.) longer exist as a tribal unit, it is believed that civilized people and hostile Indian tribes came out of the inflamed and swollen calves of the first man, Aipuku (Oberg, 1953, p. 108).

773 184 the polyandrous feature in common, for the woman had a boy (Surára and Pakidái) (see p. 247) or several children (Waiká)(456)

456. Zerries, 1958b, p. 280.

by the men.

● 796 194 184 /94/ In the religious world of thought of the Waiká one also finds ideas that are very contradictory. Thus, "Omaua" is regarded, on the one hand, as the Supreme Being and creator of the earth and of mankind, and, on the other hand, is thought of as an actual enemy of the Waiká who is closely linked with alien tribes in the west and with the whites, as well as with their pernicious influences, diseases, puzzling cultural possessions [782] (motor, gasoline, etc.) (457). Furthermore, it is noteworthy

457. Zerries, 1958b, p. 286.

that in white and black magic "Omaua" is directly invoked (458)

458. Zerries, 1958b, p. 286.

(the Surára and Pakidái communicate with Poré/Perimbó only through intermediaries), and that there lives with him a cannibalistic creature, "Omayali," which, according to Zerries, presumably represents a hypostasis of the former (459). He believes, 776 174 171

459. Zerries, 1958b, p. 280.

however, that "Omaua-Omayali" is an import from another culture

/94 cont./

[171] area a[illegible]sites corresponding parallels from Aruak /Arawak tribes of northwestern Brazil as well as from Karaiben /Carib/ of Guiana (460), which are augmented by Haekel (461). The last-

460. Zerries, 1958b, p. 286.

461. Haekel, 1959, p. 41.

named scholar then poses the question: "Did the Waika, prior to this foreign influence, lack the conception of a Supreme Being?" (462)

462. Haekel, 1959, p. 42.

He assumes that the idea of a Supreme Deity in the sense of the Surára and Pakidái related to them might have been familiar to them, since in the ethnic groups named the moon, or the lord of the moon, occasionally comes down to earth, and, as a further link, he mentions the idea of a heavenly paradise of the [171] souls (463). Then Haekel points out that the Surára and Pakidái

463. Haekel, 1959, p. 42.

as well as the Waiká, in a religious-mythological respect, show remarkable similarity with the following Karaiben /Carib/ tribes (464), though it should be noted that some link the Supreme

464. Haekel, 1959, p. 43.

Being with the moon and others with the sun (465): Kachuyana

465. Haekel, 1959, p. 35.

(Kashuiéna /Cashuena/) (even the name of the Supreme Being is very similar in this case, Purá) (466) (467), Barama (468),

466. Kruse, 1955, pp. 404 ff.

467. Polykrates, 1957, pp. 138 ff.

Surára Pakidái Waica

/94 cont./

776 174 [171]

468. Gillin, 1936, pp. 155 ff.

Kalina (469), Wajana (Oyana) (470), Makiritare (471).

469. de Goeje, 1943, pp. 26 ff.

470. Ahlbrinck, 1956, p. 26.

471. Cruxent, 1953, pp. 325 ff.

776 174 114 171 "The suggested parallels," Haekel goes on to say, "between Yanoama and Carib call attention, in any case, to a series of problems for which we are still far from a solution today. The probability of historical relationships can undoubtedly not be overlooked. But who were the 'givers,' who the 'receivers'? It is obvious that the Surara-Pakidai and Waika lie within the sphere of influence of Cariban tribes, but in my opinion there is no justification for thinking merely of influences from the Carib in connection with the similarities coming to light. One should also take into consideration the fact that Yanoama and Carib participated jointly in an older substratum" (472). On

472. Haekel, 1959, p. 43.

this point I agree with Haekel completely. I also share certain reservations that he has with regard to the avowed western orientation of the Waiká or the Yanonámi culture (473), which

473. Haekel, 1959, pp. 43/44.

Zerries represents (474). True, there is much in favor of it,

474. Zerries, 1955a, p. 83.

among other things a definite form of endocannibalism and the ritual taking of a narcotic snuffpowder. Further proof might be seen in the fact that among the Ipurína on the Rio Purús the

Surára
Pakidái

/94 cont./

776 174 171 114 moon -- "pati" -- is venerated as Supreme Being and "father," who causes the fruits to grow (475). In this case, however,

475. Ehrenreich, 1891, p. 72.

Ehrenreich believes that there has been Christian influence. Among the Sáliva in southern and eastern Colombia /95/ one also finds certain features in the religion and mythology which are reminiscent of those of the Yanonámi and Karaiben, and the Supreme Being worshiped by them is called "Puru" (476), a

476. H. v. Walde-Waldegg, 1936, pp. 40 ff.

name which sounds very similar to Poré and "Purá." Haekel further points out that the religion of the Sáliva shows marked agreement with the neighboring Aruak Achagua (477), which

477. Haekel, 1959, pp. 45/46.

was described by Hernandez de Alba (478). Moreover, it should

478. Hernandez de Alba, 1948, pp. 410 ff.

be mentioned that the Guahibo Indians on the Venzuelan banks of the Orinoco, according to Zerries, have taken over their deity, Purnaminali, from the Achagua or Sáliva (479).

479. Zerries, 1956c, p. 232.

776 171 But in the eastern regions of Guiana there are also significant parallels with respect to the religious and mythological conceptions of the Yanonámi mentioned. Reference has already been made to the Kachuyana and their Supreme Being, Purá (see p. 205). They are even more strongly pronounced among the Warrau /Warao/. In their moon myth about "Aboré" and "Wowtáh" the moon has the character of a culture hero (480),

480. Brett, 1880, p. 76. -

Surára
Pakidái
Waiká

/95 cont./

776 171 exactly as among the Surára and Pakidái; moreover, the correspondence between the names Aboré and Poré is especially great. The supplying of cultural possessions is also attributed to the deities in each case. In the Warrau myth it is even said that Aboré fled before Wowtáh into the land of the whites, from whence he provided his fellow tribesmen with import articles (481).

481. Brett, 1880, pp. 84 ff.

774 171 The idea that there are gigantic prototypes of each animal and plant species also exists among other South American tribes. Zerries has already worked out the connections for this and has cited several investigators who confirmed identical or similar views for various Indian peoples, among them Arawak, Mura, tribes of the Chaco, Karaiben in Guiana (Arekuná-Taulipang /Arecuna/, Cavina and Tumupasa Indians of northeastern Bolivia, Cayapa in Ecuador, and Yaruro in Venezuela (482).

482. Zerries, 1951, pp. 149/50.

774 171 114 The conception of the Yaruro in particular shows corresponding parallels, according to Petrullo's description (483).

483. Petrullo, 1939, p. 237.

For the Karaiben tribe Arekuná, Koch-Grünberg, to be sure, does not find any evidence of gigantic plant spirits, but their idea of the animal spirits is very similar; here they are called "podole" = father (484).

484. Koch-Grünberg, 1923a, p. 187.

773 184 If one then compares the myths which deal with happenings on the already created earth, one is struck by the fact that among the Waiká the transformations of human beings into land animals cover a wide range (485). The same is true among the

485. Zerries, 1958b, p. 283.

Surára Pakidái

/96 cont./

755 the hekurá, and best of all at night by moonlight (496). All

[174 196]

496. The hekurá are the intermediaries between human beings and the united Supreme Being Poré/Perimbó (see pp. 199 ff.).

day long, usually one or two or sometimes even several men make preliminary attempts at healing. For all sicknesses there are very definite texts, melodies, and dance steps, which are taught the young men by their chief during a two-months' training course (see pp. 143/145). If the patient dies despite all efforts, the people yield to a certain fatalism, for in that case the power of the hostile medicine man was simply stronger (497).

[191]

497. The same thing is reported by Koch-Grünberg about the Arekuná-Taulipang (Koch-Grünberg, 1923a, p. 202), Richard Schomburgk about the Warrau (Richard Schomburgk, 1847, p. 172), and Barrère as well as Quandt about the Galibi and Arowaken (Barrère, 1743, pp. 216/17; Quandt, 1807, p. 260), to mention only a few parallels.

755 For the reasons mentioned, there is only suggestive therapy,
757 supplemented by fasting and treatment with cold water. In the latter case a patient, even with the highest fever, must drink a great deal of water and take frequent baths in the nearby river or brook. He is also often exposed to pouring /97/ rain (Ill. 49), since it is assumed that it has healing powers because it comes from the rain tree of the moon (see p. 193). Sick persons who are already too weak and are unable to leave their hammocks are doused with cold water at regular intervals (498).

[191]

498. Treatment with cold water is widespread in South America. For comparison

/112 cont./

789 [821] [302] it is not needed, for example, before hunting expeditions or during a tribal migration. In this case all the men, women, and children paint their bodies with a confusion of serpentine lines, in order by this means to command the rain to stop. If 526 789 this does not help, a tug of war -- toõtotõ -- with a thick liana is arranged. This liana personifies the sucuriju (Eunectes murinus) -- [796] uaikonyá -- which, as a strong water-animal, has the power to induce Porê to stop shaking the rain tree (see p. 199). At first only two groups of red-painted men engage in the tug of war. But if the rain simply will not abate, red-painted women also take part in it. Their participation is supposed to increase the [796] pressure on the sucuriju, for it is assumed that it is of the female sex and thus particularly well-disposed toward women. Such a [857] tug of war often goes on for several hours. In most cases, besides adults, I also saw children who imitated it with a thin liana.

526 789 821 If it happens to rain while the sun is shining, the Surára and Pakidái believe that a serious fight has broken out between the moon, from which the rain comes, and the sun. Then all the members of the tribe feel obligated to come to the aid of their Supreme Being, the moon. They do this by again forming two mixed groups of men and women -- one symbolically represents the population of the moon and the other that of the sun -- who throw wet earth at each other; this "battle" is called xejejõ.

782 5. A Special Way of Showing Gratitude to Porê and Perimbõ

In connection with the festival in memory of the dead (see pp. 224 ff.) after the training period of the two medicine-man helpers (see pp. 143 f.), after the curing of the sick (see pp. 211 ff.), and other magic ceremonies, the people want to thank Porê and Perimbõ (see p. 197) in a special way, outside of the customary prayers which take place through the hekurá (see pp. 199/201). For this purpose a large calabash is filled with earth, [824] into which, in a circle, are stuck red-painted twigs of the imbauba tree (Cecropia palmata Wild.), which are connected

●776

[Additional information on the role of various supernatural beings in the mythology of the Yanoama will be found in category 539.]

/205 cont./

224 411 It is also dangerous to lose an arrow when one is hunting. That is why they only shoot the arrow when, should they miss the target, they can easily retrieve it. In spite of these precautions, the arrow is sometimes lost or remains hanging from an [782] inaccessible tree. Then the man, in order not to lose his aim, puts it under the protection of Omao, to whom he speaks, saying: "Omáuawan ipa ʃlaka toldápala!" which means: "Omao, watch over my arrow!"

224 777 789 826 To lose one's aim or luck in hunting may arise from a technical reason or a supernatural cause. The former is due to a weakening of the body brought about by sickness or other causes which influence sight or the strength of the arm. If it is due to this latter cause, the hunter knows the remedy. He goes to the forest and searches for a tree with hard, heavy wood; he cuts a piece and sets fire to it and collects the ashes, which he applies to the cuts inflicted on his arm. If he bears the pain without touching the hurt arm with the other hand and does not shout, his muscles will once again recover their lost strength and the hunter will recover his luck and good aim.

224 776 777 If the hunter returns without any game, it may be because Omao did not favor him, and this is the supernatural cause of his failure.

224 782 [777] According to our informants from the Erebato, a good hunter speaks frequently with Omao, for without his protection he will not be lucky. For this reason he says to him: "Omao awayí ipa ʃálawa hadu kapálama!" which is translated as: "Omao, draw my game out into the open!"

Worse than being unlucky is to lose one's life in a hunting accident, and in order to implore the protection of the other world, the hunter prays, "Omao sátoria palái!" that is to say: "Omao, protect me!"

224 825 /206/ Of course, all these precautions are useless if the hunter has not learned the art of hunting. He must know how the various animals live and how to identify their tracks. If these latter should be fresh, he orders his dog to follow the track of the game; the success of a Sanemá hunter depends in great

/221 cont./

765 that rises the nonmaterial part of the man ascends, his hikula
775 and his soul and possibly something else which we do not yet understand. On occasion the owner of the hĩkula can be heard as he comes whistling to carry the hĩkula of the dead man to the place where all the others are to be found.

765 The men take great quantities of yopo and dance around
[276] the fire which relentlessly consumes the bones. They sing and
[758] dance all night long, while the relatives cry out against their neighboring enemies. The ceremony comes to an end in the morning, at which time the sablĩ pulls out the bones in order to pulverize them in a gourd.

[266] The gourd, covered with a leaf and containing the ashes which will be consumed in a broth of bananas during the forthcoming feast of the dead, is kept inside his house by a relative.

121 Our knowledge of the religion and mythology of the Sanemá
771 is insufficient, for in order to study the supernatural world of a tribe it is necessary to know the culture thoroughly, since the latter, in multiple activities, is a reflection of the former, and, furthermore, to enjoy the absolute confidence of the Indian so that he may expose without subterfuge everything that may be of
[184] interest to the researcher. Nevertheless, taking as a point of departure the data which we were able to obtain and those which have been published by various authors of unquestionable reliability, we dare to take up the matter of the religious life of the Sanemá, because, despite the fact that there are many traits similar to those of the other subtribes of the Yanoama, in general there stand out certain specific elements which will give us a better understanding of the metaphysical world of the Yanoama.

793 Yanoama society seems to have three theurgists or religious
756 practitioners, but each one belongs to and officiates in a
791 different supernatural sphere.

793 The first of the three is the hɛwĩawán, or the priest, who is
● 776 the intermediary between the human community and Omao. He belongs to the pueblo which he represents as much as he does to the court of Omao. He lives in both worlds and frequently changes residence.

/221 cont./

793 Since the Sanemá people cannot exist in good conditions
● [776 without the continued and intimate contact with the house of
[621] Omao, sáiyawan, the priest makes himself indispensable in the grouping of a band, whose very existence is perpetuated in large part by the quality of the priest.

The hɛ̨wĩawán of the Sanemá devotes himself exclusively to filling his high office. For this reason he cannot work, or hunt, or fish, etc. like a common man, and he lives on the benefactions given to him by the community as compensation for the services which he renders to it.

/222/ In his frequent flights between the earth and heaven he commonly kills a vulture or sparrow hawk and that explains why he often returns with his mouth covered with blood, bringing some cashew birds and, on certain limited occasions, even a human leg, trophies which he obtained as he killed the enemy (23).

23. It is likely that all this represents the ideal habitus rather than the real one of the priest.

793 Before discussing the nature of the power of the hɛ̨wĩawán,
773 we shall first narrate the genesis of the first hɛ̨wĩawán of the Sanemá, which will explain to us how it comes about that the hɛ̨wĩawán is able to fly and why he always goes about raised some 30 centimeters from the ground when he is on the earth.

There was a man who one day went into the forest to hunt. There he was met by a Great Jaguar, omaukõhe, who is a gigantic jaguar, master of the other felines, and who goes about in an upright position like a man. The jaguar caught the man and ate all his flesh, leaving the skeleton picked clean but without breaking a single bone. The man remained alive and asked the Great Jaguar to give him other flesh. The Jaguar gave him other flesh, but told him that henceforth he would be hɛ̨wĩ (bat).
[825] And from that time on the man hɛ̨wĩawán is also a bat. He is a very timid man; children love him very much, because he never gets angry and does not scold. When he is in the company of men, he spends his time singing songs, wásámo songs, which

/222 cont./

793 the men learn because of the frequency with which he sings them.
773 He sings during the day, but especially at night. Suddenly he
[776] interrupts his song and flies up into the sky, where he joins other hɛwĩawán in order to sup with Omao.

The hɛwĩawán must jealously keep a certain number of
793 taboos, and on the degree of care with which he keeps them
784 depends, not only his power as a priest, but also the existence of
[262] all his people. Thus, for example, he must not eat crabs or other animals which in reality are men to them, just like eagles, etc.

[778] Should he do this, the "weight of the dead" kills his hikuladɛ, a disaster which, in turn, causes the death, not only
[726] of the priest, but also of a large part of his congregation. For the same reason, the hɛwĩawán never takes part in war or in any combat whatsoever, because, although he is invulnerable and no arrow or club can kill him, his hikuladɛ could not bear the "weight" of a man killed by his weapons. This is the reason why each Sanemá local group relies on a special chief for wartime.

793 The hɛwĩawán, who belongs to the court of Omao more than
[776] to the Sanemá community, does not marry a specific woman.
[836] He may have sexual relations with all the unmarried women of the group, but he is completely unconcerned about them and the children. He has no duties as either husband or father.

/223/ If a hɛwĩawán dies, any woman of the group may
[776] have a son predestined to be a hɛwĩawán. No one knows which
[781] of the boys born in the period immediately after the death of a priest may be the hɛwĩawán of the future, but one day the true hɛwĩawán will return from the forest where he has met the Great Jaguar, who changed him into a priest, replacing his human flesh with other flesh more worthy of his bones, the flesh of a bat-priest.

[771] He than informs the people of what has happened, and, as that election happens shortly after the death of a priest, the new hɛwĩawán tries to take the vacant place in time, assuring, in this manner, the continuation of uninterrupted contact which the Sanemá have had with Omao generation after generation.

/223 cont./

776 793 The Great Jaguar has certain relations with Omao, the deified hero of the Sanemá, since his name, "Omao-kõhe," indicates such a relationship, and it is possible perhaps to speak of a vocation for the office of priest, since the Sanemá Supreme Being admits him, after his encounter with the Great Jaguar, into the court of Omao.

793 171 According to South American ethnology, it is surprising to find a "specialist" in a nomadic preagricultural society, but, as we shall state below, this is the second time that we have found a similar case in Venezuela; the other one was that of the Warao wiʃiráto.

793 776 778 The Sanema priest is a member of the court of Omao, not only because the Great Jaguar changed him into a bat, but also because Omao gave him a hikuladɛ which is invisible, although it has a spherical shape like a ball, and the larger the hikuladɛ, the more powerful the priest.

The hikuladɛ of the priest, the informant explained, is like a globe which the hɛwĩawán keeps in his chest. We shall also see later that the other religious practitioner of the Sanema has a hikuladɛ too, but one which is essentially different. We 793 778 775 have the impression that the hikuladɛ of the priest contains "the souls" of the ancestors who were destined by Omao to live there and help the priest. Since the data obtained are, in our opinion, 793 778 insufficient, we do not want to hazard peremptory statements, but it seems certain that the Sanemá priest also cures the sick, 755 [114] [775] particularly those who are suffering from fever. Our informant explained to us that the ancestors (hikula-dĩb), the people of the hikuladɛ of the priest, are the ones who cure the fever when the priest brings the hikuladɛ out of his chest and deposits it for a time on the body of the patient.

Sometimes the desired effect is not attained, and that indicates that the soul of the /224/ victim has already abandoned the 793 778 628 body and does not want to return. The hĩkula therefore constitute a sort of supernatural "little pueblo" /pueblecito/ within the Sanemá community in which the priest lives and do not wish to have any communication with the kĩkula-dĩb /sic/ of the neighboring pueblo. The priests from nearby pueblos do not visit each

/224 cont./

793 778 628 776 other, for they would begin to fight each other until one of them lay inert on the ground, exhausted and overcome. But they do not kill each other. Only in the house of Omao may all the hɛ̃wĩawán gather with their hĩkula-dĩb.

793 778 775 The hĩkula-dĩb of a priest act exclusively in his rancheria, in other words, in the rancheria of the priest who figures in the house of Omao as the representative of his particular terrestial community, and for this reason more than one priest is unnecessary. In the section of the illustrations[1] one can see the 532 hikuladɛ́ of a priest, drawn by one of our informants. One sees 793 778 775 126 there five hĩkula-dĩb, or souls of ancestors of the group in which the priest acts. The uppermost figure represents fever. In the center one can see a quadrangular figure which is a house. One of the beings who is inside it is the priest, but what can be seen on the left side is a coleopteran, a scarab. Under the house is seen the heart of the priest.

The informant, after having drawn the figure, insisted emphatically that we tear it up, and he suffered some anguish for having given it to us. After several days had passed, I took him the drawing in order to ask for more details and found him 532 793 778 775 126 825 calm and unworried. The reason for suffering this anguish is based on the belief that a Sanemá must never speak of the insect of the house of the hikuladɛ́. As a matter of fact our informant never mentioned its name. I identified the insect as a scarab on the basis of the descriptions that he gave us and because it was not the first time that I had heard the scarab or other coleopterans mentioned as a supernatural being in South American ethnology.

171 773 825 778 Such is the belief of the Lengua of the Gran Chaco, who affirm that the Great Scarab created the universe and peopled it with spirits and men. The Toba, also of the Chaco, call it payak, a name which means spirit; and it is interesting with regard to the hĩkuladɛ́ of the Sanemá priest to note the Mataco custom of attributing a supernatural power to a maraca /gourd rattle/ with sacred beetles (Metraux, 1946d, pp. 350, 352, 353, 367). The similarity between the hikuladɛ́ of the Sanemá and the "sacred maraca" of many South American tribes is very symptomatic.

[1] [See p. 70 - -Analyst]

/225 cont./ The sanemá say that the
793 hɛwĩawán kills vultures and sparrow hawks on his travels (Becher,
825 1960, p. 96). As we have already explained in another section of this chapter, the Sanemá believe that the eagle and other birds of prey are "men" who can be killed only if they belong to an enemy tribe.

793 The hikulaɛ offers the priest the possibility of flying to the
798 house of Omao. In order that I might understand him better and
[796] not doubt his veracity, the native making the drawing fixed a
[126] propeller to the mysterious sphere. One might say that the
[795] hɛwĩawán is carrying the soul of a dead person to the house of Omao.

756 The second religious practitioner of the Sanemá is a shaman, who is called sablí. The supernatural world over which he has power is different from the world of the priest, and therefore his function is different from that of the former.

[533] In order to become a shaman, the candidate must submit to a very rigorous training under the guidance of an old sablí who knows how to sing the "Great Kɛɛ."

756 /226/ During the period of apprenticeship, which lasts
276 several weeks, the candidate takes yopo continually through a
262 tube or simply with the hand, eats very little and only the food
515 prescribed; he does not bathe and almost does not speak. Among
123 the Waica of the Upper Orinoco I saw a group of these candidates who gave me a depressing impression since they showed prolonged suffering as a result of the consumption of the drug. We were not able to speak with them, and we were not allowed to take blood samples from them as we did with the other members of the rancheria.

756 It seems that all the men are potentially sablíes, but
533 among them there are some who are very strong and others who
974 are weak, and only the strongest ones are able to sing the "kɛɛ" well. This song is rendered by the sablí at the end of his period of instruction, when the candidates are prepared and ready to receive the hĩkulas, or "specific vital principles" of the species of flora and fauna, with the exception of fish. As soon as they hear the call of their master, they obey and go toward his locality, where they find the sablí candidate waiting for them to enter his

/226 cont./

756 chest. They enter, without loss of time, through the extremi-
533 ties of the body and through the head. They arrive in the order
774 in which their names are sung by the master sablí, who in this way "builds a pueblo" of a microcosmos in the body of the man. The stronger the master, the greater will be the "pueblo," and the greater this "pueblo" is, the better chance the sablí will have to augment his inner world and his power during his life.

756 The hikuladi of the sablí is essentially different from that
774 of the priest, in the sense that it is inhabited by the vital prin-
[778] ple of vegetable and animal species and not by the souls of departed ancestors. The man also has a specific híkula, different from his soul and which, as is true of the vegetable and animal kingdoms, seems to be immortal and spiritual, essentially joined to animate matter until death. Each specimen of a species has a specific híkula; after death, the speciman goes to a luminous place in the forest. While the soul of a man may abandon the body during sleep, etc., without its being detrimental for the man himself, the híkula never leaves until the moment of death. Furthermore, the soul is typically human, while the híkula is found in man and also in plants and animals. Some informed us with insistence that women and small children do not have híkula.

773 Here is the story which explains the origin and the nature
774 of the híkula in the animate world.

• [776] Chinanídmawan is a gigantic demon of dreadful shape, with long, sharp claws. He has skin which is impenetrable and as hard as rock.

/227/ One day Chinanídmawan came to attack the Sanemá. The latter posted themselves with their weapons to face his attack. Soon, however, the Sanemá realized that arrows and lances had no effect on the demon, who captured most of his enemies. Chinanídmawan quartered and devoured his victims, but kept the skins, which he nailed out on boards around and inside his house.
[171] (It is extremely interesting that this custom of keeping the skin
[727] of enemies has been preserved in Sanemá mythology, since it is reminiscent of some tribes of the Cauca, in Colombia, of the Mauta of Ecuador, of the Huauca of Peru, and of the Inca. It also recalls the cult of Xipe in Central America.)

6: Vinci T-5 (1950) 1959 SQ18 Yanoama SQ18
Sanema

Sempronio—this was the name we had given to an Auai boy who had elected to stay with us.

We made our way up the river of the same name which plunges down from the highlands, with wonderful falls, into a ravine thick with vegetation. The Shirians were strongly disinclined to go anywhere near the falls. It took us three days to overcome their objections and they only decided to go along with us when we told them we should otherwise set off by ourselves. Luis Antonio explained that the deep pool formed by the waterfall was the home of an enormous watersnake, *Lalakilpara*—a monster which lay coiled in readiness to devour anyone or anything it saw looking over the edge of the pool.

We laughed, but as far as the Indians were concerned our laughter fell on deaf ears. Luis Antonio was no exception, and he warned us not to jest about certain things. Numerous trails made by tapir and peccary were pointed out to us as paths the serpent had taken. One curious thing about the monster which remained unexplained was that he came regularly along the river-bank to the Kirisochi savannah for his excretions. But at last the Indians overcame their reluctance enough to make an inspection of the pool. Dumbfounded, they had to admit that Lalakilpara didn't exist, except as a highly coloured fiction among their older kinsfolk, who could recount the monster's whole history. It seemed to us that the power of fancy had transformed a few cross-currents driven furiously against the walls of the gorge by the whirlpool set up by the tumbling water, into this gigantic serpent whose breath—the air-disturbance—could suck down any man or beast who went too near the edge of the precipice. As to the distance the monster covered for purposes of nature, the symbolism here was even clearer: what it sought to explain was the way in which the river's alluvial matter found its way to the Kirisochi plain. The water was calmer by the time it reached this point, and the detritus carried along with it tended to be deposited here. This fable of the serpent was an example of a natural phenomenon stated in terms of myth—the only such example we found among the Shirians. After we had exploded the legend, Lalakilpara slowly died away in the Indian mind, his place being taken by the aeroplane and the outboard motor—monsters no less fantastic, and no less dread.

The slopes of the Sariuriñama range were very poor in wild life, as is often the case with these mountains, and Luis Antonio, to whom we had given a gun after he had proved himself to be a better shot than we were, was only able to get a Capuchin monkey or two. We boiled them—the result being a murky

6: Vinci T-5 (1950) 1959 SQ18 Yanoama SQ18
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follow. Then, in the same fashion, the medicine-man would announce the name of another fruit, let us say *olashi*. The chorus would repeat the same formula. And so on, through all the thirty-two fruits of the forest, the litany was sung. Then it was the animals' turn—those that provided meat. From the noble tapir right down to the worm: might he pass serenely from his muddy lair into the tomb of the Samatari stomach.

When the victualling business had thus been settled, the time was ripe for more general songs and prayers. One little song that turned up I had already heard among the Guayca and other Shirians. The tune was easily recognizable, catchy, even, but the words were strange, and probably not understood by the singers themselves. Then came isolated songs, and broken snatches of tunes that went on all night till the first gleam of dawn, when the priest and his flock gradually dropped off to sleep. The ceremony was over.

It might appear from a hasty glance at their ceremonies of propitiation and exorcism that the Shirians believe in the supernatural, but this is not so.

We often questioned Uarema on the subject, but his reply was always in the negative, and he laughed at the Makiritari's Canaima and the other tribes' Maguaritòn. 'We don't believe in those stories,' he answered, invariably, in his picaroon Spanish. The Shirians do not believe in supernatural beings such as gods, devils and their intermediaries. Certain ceremonies of theirs, it is true, are addressed to powers which we should not consider as belonging to the material world, but to the Shirian mind they do belong to this world, like other evident natural forces.

For instance, the medicine-man's cures for the sick possess a value and a methodology corresponding to medicine as we practise it. The sickness—the bad thing—is clearly visible. The medicine-man is a man with a powerful voice, which frightens the bad thing as it might frighten a man. The bad thing is forced to take flight, leaving the sufferer free. Magic, as we conceive it, is not involved.

Another example will emphasize the Shirian viewpoint even better. When the Shirians are shooting the rapids, anyone on board without a definite job, such as steering or paddling, will make a gesture with his hand to keep the swirling waters well away. For us, such a gesture would imply some sort of superstitious idea, for there is no physical connection between the hand that is trying to ward off the water and the water itself. But to the Indians it is rather an example of a purely physical phenomenon arising out of the man's will-power and his determination that the boat shall not be swamped, which his

/470 cont./

512 men. Some of them sing in singsong voices to influence the
[276] spirits, while others wander around like drunks. A few do not take any "yopo" at all. These "yopo" cantilenas generally last for about two hours.

In the afternoon a few more women, including some of those who were in the conuco in the morning, go out to look for /471/ firewood. Other women devote themselves to spinning cotton. At about 5:00 in the afternoon the women and girls go down to the stream to fill all the gourds or totumas.

[824] A little before dark, the evening meal ends. Palm leaves
[721] are placed so as to obstruct the entrances to the paths against
[176] the coming of wandering spirits and also to make greater difficulty for any attacking band coming from an enemy settlement. Every house lights its own fire and prepares for the night. At about 7:00 P.M. all is silent.

[535] But if the moon comes out, the women and children may
[533] continue singing and dancing until well into the night. Or when
[203] there are visitors who arrived during the day, there might be
[594] crooning of news throughout the night, until the coming of the sun puts an end to it.

Names

553 Every individual receives a name given by his parents. Un-
551 til the child receives a name, he is called by any of the standard names that are applied to small children. The use of these standard names is usually prolonged for several years after the boy or girl has received his own name. It is taboo to give one person the name of another. There are no homonyms or namesakes. An individual might be given the name of a plant, an animal, an action, an aspect, or sometimes simply be given some name invented by his parents.

551 Nicknames are given freely. Some have a root, others do not. Usually they are very descriptive and frequently very biting.

It is not good manners to call a person by his name, if it can be avoided. It is always better to say: the older brother of so-and-so, the older sister of so-and-so, the husband of so-and-so, the father of so-and-so, or the mother of so-and-so.

/479 cont./

75 If a child is frightened, the mother or guardian quickly
774 takes a handful of leaves and sweeps the place where the little creature was frightened. They do this so that the child's soul will not run off in fear and the child become sick.

/480/ Sometimes when a child is sick, they believe that the soul of the little creature has abandoned its body. Then they dispatch commissions in pursuit of it, which pass through the sites where they suspect that the child has been, and they come back sweeping the path with some branches and calling aloud for the little creature. If the child improves, it is because its soul was found; otherwise they must have missed the site where it was.

755 They believe that some sicknesses are due to the spirit or
[753] spirits which have got into the body of the sick person. In order
• [776] for the sick person to recover his health, the harmful spirit must be cast out of his body. The one who tries to remove this spirit from the body of a sick person first takes a little "yopo" by way of the nasal passage. He then intones a crooning song, while he marches to and fro in front of the patient. Then, from time to time he approaches the latter and rubs the affected part, which he pinches and hits, pulling on it, threatening the spirit and asking it to go away, making all sorts of noises in order to frighten the spirit (or spirits) so that they will go away. After being with his patient for a few minutes, he resumes the crooning. This practice is repeated many times, and if the desired outcome is not obtained, other men will test their forces, trying to cast out from there the harmful spirit.

[776] They might then come to the conclusion that this is not a matter of a sickness caused by a spirit hidden in the body of the sick person, but rather by one which has hidden in some part of the settlement. Thus a group of men organizes a "hunt for the spirit." Each of them takes a little "yopo" by way of the nasal passage, and, after crooning for a short time in front of the sick person, they begin to make an inspection throughout the settlement, house by house, inspecting every basket and corner, swinging machetes and axes, pointing with the arrows, blowing through the "yopo" tubes as if they were blowguns, continuing the whole

/486 cont./

825 821 [794] Animals do not have spirits. The thunder is the voice of certain creatures who dwell in the clouds. Frequently I have heard the Guaika say: "Listen to how many there are!"

Lightning is a creature similar to a flame /llama, "flame," "llama"/, which during storms leaps to earth in order to eat trees.

"Ekoa" and "Koje" are rivers in the sky. "Omoa" is the one who pours the water from these rivers over the land. The "amajini" are like human beings, but smaller, who live under the surface of the earth.

796 [753] "Sulilíwa" can hide himself in the settlements and cause sicknesses. "Wakaliwa" can get into the human body and cause sickness.

821 The wind is regarded as a very terrible enemy, and they believe that it is sent by an enemy. When a storm approaches, the men go out and try to turn it toward an enemy settlement, or at least they hope to be able to turn it away from their own settlement.

789 754 [756] Sorcery and magic are practiced by most of the men. They believe that by taking a little "yopo" through the nasal passage they may have a greater influence on the spirits. There are religious advisers who apparently know the spirits and recommend the measures which must be taken against them.

802 Numbers and Measures

The Guaika /Waica/ have words to designate "one" and "two." Above these quantities it is necessary to say "few," "several," "many," "a great many," "all," etc. They can say two and one, or two and two, but they generally do not do this. They show exact numbers higher than two by raising their fingers. I have seen them cross the dwelling to see if a person is holding up three or four fingers in the semidarkness. /487/ I have asked for as many as 12 objects and received the exact quantity by showing them four fingers of my hand three consecutive times. They understand this, but to express the idea of 11 is quite difficult for them to understand.

11: Chagnon E-5 (1964-1968) 1988 SQ18 Yanoama SQ18

The next layer is called *hadu hã misi:* sky layer. It is made of earth on the top surface and provides the eternal home for the souls of the departed. A complete replica of life on earth is to be found on top of *hadu*, except that the inhabitants are spirits of men, not real men. They garden, make witchcraft, hunt, eat, and in general do what living man does. Everything that exists on earth has a counterpart on *hadu*, a sort of mirror image, although the activities of the two groups of objects and beings are independent of each other.

The bottom surface of *hadu* is the visible portion of the sky. The celestial beings are attached to this surface and move across it. It is not thought to be very far above the earth, since many of my informants asked me if I had crashed into it when I flew in an airplane.

Man dwells below the sky on "this layer": *hai hã misi*. It originated when a piece of *hadu* broke off and fell to a lower level. This layer is a vast jungle, sprinkled with innumerable Yąnomamö villages. These are conceived to be located on earth, as shown in Fig. 2-4c. Even foreigners are thought to live in a type of house that resembles the Yąnomamö dwelling; after all, foreigners derived from the Yąnomamö by a process of degeneration.

Finally, the plane underneath this layer is almost barren. A single village of spirit-men is found here, the Amahiri-teri. A long time ago, after the earth layer was formed by a piece of *hadu*, another chunk of *hadu* fell down and crashed through earth. It hit earth at a place where the Amahiri-teri lived, carrying their village down to the bottom layer. Unfortunately, only their *shabono* and gardens were carried with the piece of *hadu*. Hence, the Amahiri-teri have no neighborhood (*urihi*) in which to hunt for game, and so they send their spirits up to earth to capture the souls of living children and eat them. There is a constant struggle between the evil spirits of Amahiri-teri shamans and the evil spirits of shamans on this layer, earth: They send malevolent demons against each other and preoccupy themselves with defending their respective villages from evil spirits.

The Amahiri-teri people lived at the time of the *no hadabö*, the first men. These original Yąnomamö were distinct from living man in that they were part spirit (*yai*) and part human. When they died, they became *yai*, spirits. *No hadabö* means, literally, "those who are now dead"; in a cosmological context, it refers to the time of the first beings.

THE FIRST BEINGS The first beings cannot be accounted for. The Yąnomamö simply presume that the cosmos originated with these people. Most of them, and there were many, had a specific function, such as creating a useful plant or object. They figure prominently in mythology. Many of them bear the names of plants and animals that are important in the Yąnomamö economy, and the first beings are considered to be the spirits of these. I will relate a few specific tales about some of these first beings, retaining where possible the Yąnomamö narrative style.

One of the first beings was called Boreawĩ, or simply Bore. He was the first to acquire plantains, the staple of the Yąnomamö diet. Because he had plantains first, he was the headman (*pata dadihiwã*) of the first beings. Boreawĩ did not tell the others that he had plantains, as he did not want to share them. At that time, the first beings ate only dirt and animals, as there was no domesticated food. One day another of the first beings, Horonama, got caught in a rain so he took refuge in a sheltered place in the jungle. He was lost and did not know whose neighborhood he was in. By luck, he took refuge in the very place where Boreawĩ had hidden his cultivated plantains. Horonama, a dirt eater,

SHAMANS The nature of the relationship between man and spirit is largely one of hostility. The shamans, by and large, spend most of their time casting charms on enemies and enjoining their own personal demons to prevent harm from befalling the local people. Magic and curing are intimately bound up in shamanism, the practitioner devoting his efforts alternatively to causing and curing sickness.

The demons that the shamans contact are *hekura*, very tiny humanoid beings that dwell on rocks and mountains. Particularly successful shamans can control these demons to such an extent that the *hekura* will come and live inside the chest of the shaman. Each shaman solicits the aid of numerous *hekura* and attempts to lure them into his body.

Men who want to become shamans (*shabori*) go through a simple rite of fasting and chastity. They sit before their houses, use only a few trails, eat very little, and spend most of their time in a contemplative stupor brought about by hunger and drugs. After several days of this, the initiate has entered the world of the *shabori*, and can practice his skill. Each village has as many *shabori* as there are men who wish to enter this status: probably half of the men in each village are shamans.

Rerebawä told me that he was going to become a *shabori*, as he enjoyed taking the drugs and making contact with the spirit world. He decided to do this because his wife is still nursing their youngest child so that he cannot have sexual relationships with her anyway; the obligatory chastity associated with becoming a shaman will not be as difficult now as it would be when his wife weans the child. No *hekura* will dwell in the chest of a novice *shabori* who continues to have sexual relationships. After the practitioner has captured the *hekura* and they become acquainted with him, they will stay in his chest after he resumes his sexual activities.

Contact with the *hekura* is achieved by taking drugs. Particularly adept *shabori* can contact their *hekura* with only a pinch of drug, which they inhale directly from their fingers. Most of them, however, take a large dose of the drug by means of the hollow blowing tube. The *shabori* then prances back and forth in front of his house and chants to the demons he attempts to control, enjoining them to descend on enemies and cause them sickness (see Fig. 2-9). If he is curing someone, he chants before the house of the patient, rubs him, massages him, and draws the evil spirit causing the sickness to some extremity, such as an arm or leg. Then he sucks or pulls the spirit out and carries it away from the sick person, either vomiting it out or throwing it away, depending on how he extracted it originally. The Yąnomamö do not employ medicines made from plants or animals. Consequently, they rely exclusively on the cures that the *shabori* effect, fighting supernatural ills with supernatural medicine.

One of the surprises of my field experience was that I had to spend a great deal of time curing the sick, and my medicines were always in demand. The sick people, however, always took their illnesses to the *shabori* after I had treated them—one cannot be too careful.

CONCLUSION In summary, the Yąnomamö have effected an adaptation to their three environments. This is not to say that other means and techniques could not do the job equally well; but the peculiar combination of technology, social organization, and cosmology found among the Yąnomamö distinguishes them as a group from all other tribes. Although their technology is primitive, it permits them to exploit their jungle habitat sufficiently well to provide them with the wherewithal of physical comfort. The nature of their economy—slash-and-burn agriculture—coupled with the fact that they

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and guests that gradually died off as each group busied itself in preparation for the dance.

Shortly after noon a rumor circulated through the village that the visitors had been raiding the gardens at night and stealing plantains. A number of people, particularly older men, were visibly upset by this new information, giving rise to another rumor that there would be a chest-pounding duel to set the matter straight. The guests had already worn their welcome thin by arriving uninvited a week in advance and by eating excessively. Their hosts were becoming angry with them, as it was all too obvious that they were deliberately taxing their hosts' patience; they were intimidating them.

The men of the host group had finished their preparations for the feast; they were all painted in red and black, bearing colorful feathers. They had cleaned the debris from their houses, had finished hauling out the weeds they had picked from the village clearing, and had brought in quantities of food to give their guests. Now, it was time for them to take *ebene*, their hallucinogenic drug. They separated into several groups and began blowing the brownish-green powder up each other's nostrils with 3-foot long hollow tubes. As the drug would be administered, each recipient would reel from the concussion of air, groan, and stagger off to some convenient post to vomit. Within ten minutes of taking the drug, the men would be bleary-eyed and wild, prancing around in front of their houses, stopping occasionally to vomit or to catch their breath. In each group there would be one man particularly adept at chanting to the *bekuru*, the mountain demons, and he would soon take over the show, while the others retired to the sidelines in a stupor, green slime dripping from their nostrils. Should there be sick people in the village, the adept chanters—the *shakori*—would cure them by chanting, massaging, sucking, and vomiting out the evil spirit that caused the sickness. Otherwise, they would chant about other things, perhaps sending their *bekuru* to enemy villages to eat the souls of children, or enjoining them to prevent their enemies from doing the same. Occasionally, one of the men takes too much of the drug and become violent. On this particular occasion, Shiimima, one of Kąobawï's brothers, grabbed his bow and arrows and ran to the center of the village. This caused a minor sensation for a moment, but one of the men managed to catch and disarm him, hiding his weapons so he could not find them. Things returned to normal again, and the other participants in the drug-taking began chanting to Shiimima to restore him to his senses. The chanting lasted for an hour or so, and the participants, one by one, returned to their houses to clean up their paint jobs; most of them had smeared their careful work by vomiting all over themselves.

While the men were taking their drugs, the women were busy painting and decorating themselves with feathers and red pigment. The visitors, also, were busy at the same tasks, and the excitement of the feast reached fever proportions by mid-afternoon. A few women were still busy finishing trade baskets, while Kąobawï's younger brothers continued with the monotonous cooking of what seemed to them an endless number of plantains.

Finally, an old man from the visiting group entered the village and marched unceremoniously across the clearing while the members of Kąobawï's group cheered him. He was too old to join the dancing, but too respected to wait behind with the women and children while the younger men put on their display. This was evidence that the visitors were about to send in their delegate to accept the feast invitation at Kąobawï's house.